

## **GRSMMP Conference call 20 December 2006 - Notes**

1. Participants in the conference call included Greg Ducote, Randy Runnels, Carl Ferraro, Russ Watson, Barbara Keeler, Quinton Dokken, Cherie Price, Jeff Lillycrop, Lynn Martin, and Larry Parson. The conference call agenda is included below.
2. Russ Watson from FWS announced that he will be retiring in January and recommended including Jim Boggs and Kevin Roy as his replacements for now. The group congratulated Russ and wished him a happy retirement.
3. The first item on the agenda was discussion of the Purpose Statement, specifically, the needs statement that was drafted resulting from discussions at the New Orleans workshop in November. There were no comments and the states were asked to further review and provide input if they feel the statement needs further refinement.
4. Discussions were led to the Master Plan outline, item II - Regional Sediment Processes. The current outline focuses more on the general processes (hydrological, meteorological, and geological) in defining the foundation of regional sediment management. It was suggested the plan focus more on system processes such as riverine fluvial, wetland, coastal, etc. as these processes better define and are more related to the management strategies of RSM. Understanding such processes will provide an introduction to system level changes that have taken place over time, e.g. Mississippi River system, historically contributed x amount of sediment, now contributes y amount. This portion of the Plan doesn't need to be sediment transport 101 but should lay the basis for the historic and current influences on sediment transport and availability. This section should recognize that actions driven by humans and those that are "natural," describe the functional baseline attributes of sediment processes which are important for developing sediment budgets and RSM alternatives.
5. It was also recommended that biological/community ecology information be included in Section II and should address issues such as infauna types and recruitment and preferred sediment grain size. This section should provide references to more readily access information/literature for analyzing effects of proposed sediment management actions.
6. A summary of the Scientific Assessment Workshop held Dec 5 and 6 in St. Petersburg, Florida was discussed. There were about 30 participants including representatives from the states of LA, TX, and FL, the Corps (all coastal districts, ERDC, IWR), USGS, MMS, private coastal consultants, and academia. The first topic of discussion dealt with sediment budgets, both sand and finer materials. Of particular concern was where these types of studies are being conducted, what data is required to support them, and how reliable are they (calibrated or uncalibrated). Identified information sources to support sediment budgets include littoral sand transport data, dredging records, fluvial systems, storms, data on beach fills, and shoreline changes. Other related discussions dealt with data reliability and data gaps.

Representatives from USGS talked about their programs involving coastal and marine sediment resources including coastal vulnerabilities, barrier island systems, wetland loss, and marine aggregate assessment. MMS presented information on programs that were initiated for sand resources dealing with hurricane restoration. State representatives presented their involvement in search for sand sources and how information is being stored. The various studies and programs have produced a number of data bases such as usSEABED, SED, ROSS, and LASARD that are not interconnected which may constrain data availability and sharing.

The presentations and discussions identified challenges in the availability of sediment resources. Even though there may be lots of sediment out there, not all of it is available because of restrictions pertaining to Federal preserves, existing infrastructure (oil and gas pipelines), cultural resources, storm impacts, and various other environmental constraints.

Discussions continued towards the problem of data storage, maintenance, and accessibility. A presentation describing the Priority Habitat Information System (PHINS) was made to the group. This program is a Federal and State partnership to support the implementation of the Governor's Action Plan and intended to provide users with habitat information and serve as a foundation for geospatial data. PHINS may have the potential as a geospatial platform for linking data from the different databases maintained by the various agencies in support of regional management. Such a platform can provide the ability to leverage the architecture of the partner agencies and provide linkage to everyone's data, not a centralized database. All will still be responsible for collecting, storing, and maintaining their own data.

Final discussions identified the need for the states to define their data needs, what decisions are being supported by the data, and their sediment needs. It is recognized that dredging projects can be a valuable sediment resource. A recommendation to the Corps from the workshop was made to devise a means for better sediment data access and management for dredging activities such as where dredging is taking place, sediment type, and where the sediment is placed. The conference call participants interjected that understanding the economics and the technological means of moving the sediments may result in better planning and that there is currently no good handle on such costs and the consequences pertaining to the National Standard. The Scientific Assessment workshop also identified the need to connect mapping and lidar programs to support the Master Plan.

A more comprehensive summary of the workshop is being put together and will be distributed to the GRSMMP group when completed.

7. A suggestion was made for compiling a list of references useful to the GRSMMP. Anyone with references to share can send them to Larry Parson. A package called InNote (sp.?) was recommended for managing references. This package creates a searchable database and can import references, abstracts, and full text articles.

8. The next topic of discussion was the agenda for the March GRSMMP workshop. A draft agenda is included below. Based on previous discussions and concerns, the workshop was cut back to 2 half day sessions, beginning the afternoon of March 8 and concluding by noon on the 9th. The workshop's main focus will identify the States' regional sediment management issues and associated opportunities and sediment needs. If time permits, a PHINS demo can be included. Topics such as data needs, data management, etc. will be addressed at a future workshop.

9. Quenton Dokken (Gulf of Mexico Program) initiated discussion on the ultimate product of the GRSMMP effort. It is important to consider how the GRSMMP will be organized to keep it alive and generate a strong voice that influences policy. Greg Ducote (Louisiana) spoke of the need for a policy paper regarding RSM in the Gulf and a vision of where we are going. It's anticipated that hearing about state needs at the upcoming workshop will begin to bring this together into something the states can buy into and begin to shape sediment management policy. It must be recognized that all states may not need the same things and that it's not early to think past the workshop to envision where we want this effort to end up. One of Greg's visions is to be able to get more beneficial use from the material the Corps dredges from navigation channels.

10. Carl Ferraro (Alabama) expressed concerns about holding the workshops if EPA grants don't come through.

11. The conference call concluded with a reminder that the next Restoration workgroup conference call is scheduled for January 10. The next GRSMMP call is scheduled for Thursday, January 18 at 2:00 central. Carl, Larry, and Quenton stayed online to discuss coordination of workshop logistics.

**Gulf of Mexico Regional Sediment Management Master Plan  
Conference Call  
December 20, 2006**

**AGENDA**

**Discussion**

- Objectives/Purpose Statement**
- Master Plan Outline**
- Statement of Need**

**Scientific Assessment Workshop Summary**

**March Workshop**

- Agenda**
- Participants**

**Other Issues**

**Next Conference Call**

**Gulf of Mexico Regional Sediment Management Master Plan (GRSMMP)**  
**Workshop**  
**March 8-9, 2007**  
**Draft Agenda**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 8**

- 1:00 - 1:15**    Intro and Overview of GRSMMP
- 1:15 – 1:45**    Related Regional Sediment Processes  
                    - Riverine, Estuarine, Coastal, Wetland, Marsh
- 1:45 – 2:15**    Outcome of Scientific Assessment Workshop
- 2:15 – 2:35**    Break

**State Regional Sediment Management Problems and Concerns**

- 2:35 – 2:55**    Texas
- 2:55 – 3:15**    Louisiana
- 3:15 – 3:35**    Mississippi
- 3:35 – 3:55**    Alabama
- 3:55 – 4:15**    Florida
- 4:15 – 4:30**    General Discussion
- 4:30**            Adjourn

**FRIDAY, MARCH 9**

**State Regional Sediment Management Opportunities and Sediment Needs**

- 8:00 – 8:20**    Texas
- 8:20 – 8:40**    Louisiana
- 8:40 – 9:00**    Mississippi
- 9:00 – 9:20**    Alabama
- 9:20 – 9:40**    Florida

**9:40 – 10:20** Regional Management Obstacles (Discussion)

**10:20 – 10:40** Break

**10:40 – 11:10** Direction of GRSMMP

**11:10 – 11:30** Wrap-up

Action Items  
Next Meeting  
Next Workshop

**11:30** Adjourn